

Southwest Area Engine Operators Committee Meeting  
November 6, 2003 - Albuquerque, NM

Minutes from the fourth meeting:

The meeting was called to order at 0833 on Thursday, 11/6/03 at the Fire Use Training Academy facility in Albuquerque, NM. Thirty-six people from the Southwest Area were in attendance with 8 out of the 10 Zones being represented. Dave Bales began the meeting with introductions the agenda for the day. The agenda called for concerns/discussions from the Zone representatives, Charter revisions, SWA Academy information, SOP presentations, vote for new officers and other committee business. Keith V. Halloran reviewed the minutes from last meeting.

Of the eight Zones present, four actual Zone chairs attended the meeting with other four sending folks in their place. Taos and Gila Zones had no representation. Paul Churchill brought up an issue about the Central West Zone having questions to recognize SWAEOC. This helped to transition into the next agenda topic of our Charter. No other SWAEOC Zone reps had any concerns or discussions.

Mike Tucker revisited our Charter with an example from Region 5. Our election process will be altered. Currently the charter states at the end of the second year both the chair and vice-chair will be voted in for a minimum of two year's.

The committee agreed on a new election process. The committee elects a vice-chair every fall meeting. This member has a two-year commitment. The first year he or she will serve as the SWAEOC Vice-chair and the following year move into the SWAEOC Chair position. The Recording Secretary will still be elected every other fall meeting. Keith V. Halloran will make the necessary changes and send it to the SWAEOC Chair for approval and signatures. SWAEOC will not allow chairs to stay in office, even if they are doing a good job, in order to allow for all agencies to be represented and involved. Special elections may occur if the Chair, Vice-chair or Secretary needs to step down.

Mike Tucker is the SWA Academy work group lead and presented academy information with Todd Lerke. They looked at a successful Regional academy and sent five R3 engine captains to shadow the instructors. These five captains videotaped and observed what R5 was doing. R5 was extremely supportive of our folks going over to learn from them. With this information retrieved, a briefing paper was created and presented at a Forest FMO meeting. Mike expressed how challenging this academy would be to get off the ground because of the interagency and multiple engine types. The Academy would NOT be based on S-courses, but based on "hands-on" experiences. This would include vehicle maintenance, driving and pumping. Instructor qualifications will be a priority due to the low amount of Facilitative Instructors. The Academy will be implemented in a five-year plan, with the ultimate goal to be self-supported. Costs, locations and time of year are still being explored. A power-point presentation was shown and will be available soon, possibly on the website. The briefing paper will be available on the SWAEOC section of the SWA website. Discussing further implementation, eight R3 engine captain/engineers will go to R5 and go through their academy in spring of 2004. Approximately 20 "shadows" will go also to learn how to teach the curriculum. All of these folks will be decided upon at the next Zone meeting and those individuals will be put on a master list. This information NEEDS to be given to Mike Tucker on or before Nov. 19, 2003.

Art Gonzales revisited with our SOP's and told that Human Resources had them blessed. These SOP's can be used as a base for all of the various Interagency fire programs. These will also be posted on the SWAEOC section of the SWA website.

After lunch, we set out continuing goals and other possible concerns:

- The Academy will remain first and foremost.
- Zone representatives need to get more backing from other agencies in the area and FMO's.
- Specialized training in the short-term.
- Position Description upgrades for the Type VI, other Agency upgrades and continue employee development.
- Sit in on the Hotshot Conference.
- Length of employment - PFT vs. Permanent-Seasonal (consistency across region).

- Safety issues - new fire shelters, Kevlar/nomex pants, brush jackets and ember separator.

From these continuing goals, SWAEOC decided to name the Academy to be the number one goal, followed by Type VI PD upgrades and finally specialized training in the short run.

With it being the fall SWAEOC meeting, we finished the meeting with the elections following the new election process. The SWAEOC Chair was put to the election first. There were eight of the ten Zones represented. We decided to go ahead with the vote. Mike Tucker and Todd Lerke were the two nominees. Mike Tucker received 8 votes and will serve as the Chair for 2004. Todd Lerke, Virgil Reynolds and Dennis Haygood were nominated for the SWAEOC Vice-Chair position. Todd Lerke received 7 votes will serve as the Vice-chair for 2004 and transition into the Chair position in 2005.

The next meeting for the SWAEOC will be in Arizona, **POSSIBLY** at the Goldfield R.S. on the Mesa R.D. on February 5, 2004.

Submitted by:  
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SWAEOC Rec. Sec.